



First Steps

**Indiana's Early Intervention System
for Infants, Toddlers and their Families**



What is the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)?

Indiana's Interagency Coordinating Council on Infants and Toddlers (ICC), which was first convened in 1987, is appointed by the Governor to advise and assist Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the Lead Agency, in its responsibilities. Comprised of members representing parents of children with special needs, state agency groups, early intervention service providers, legislators, pre-service professionals, and others, the ICC is committed to holding the vision of First Steps Early Intervention Services in Indiana and to keeping abreast of issues, concerns, and trends which may affect First Steps in the future.

The ICC utilizes standing committees and task forces, developed around the basic components of early intervention, to identify current issues, gather information, and make informed and supportive recommendations to the Bureau. Family members, early intervention providers, Local Planning and Coordinating Council members and other interested community leaders serve on the committees and task forces of the ICC. With the help of these local representatives, the ICC can assist the Bureau in developing an early intervention system of the highest quality, which seeks to balance family-centered services with fiscal responsibility.

What is First Steps?

Indiana's First Steps System is a family-centered, locally-based, coordinated system that provides early intervention services to infants and young children with disabilities or who are developmentally vulnerable.

First Steps brings together families and professionals from education, health, and social service agencies. By coordinating locally available services, First Steps is working to give Indiana's children and their families the widest possible array of early intervention resources.

Families who are eligible to participate in Indiana's First Steps System include children, ages birth to three years, whom:

- Are experiencing developmental delays;
- Have a diagnosed condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay;
- Are at risk of having substantial developmental delay as a result of biological risk factors if early intervention services are not provided.

First Steps is administered by the Bureau of Child Development within the Division of Family and Children of Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA).

Members of the Indiana Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Infants and Toddlers

Valerie Strohl, Council Chairperson,
Parent, Zionsville

Joseph Anderson, Vice Chair,
Parent, Muncie

Parents:

Lori Crossley, Bloomington

Barbara Heffernan, Kokomo

Kathryn Morrison, Muncie

Early Intervention Providers

Anna Dusick, M.D.,

Riley Hospital for Children, Indianapolis

Jackie Garritano,

Tradewinds Rehabilitation Center, Gary

Karen Tyner,

Turnstone Center, Fort Wayne

Ginger Whitler,

Occupational Therapist, Evansville

State Agency Representatives

Sheron Cochran, Department of Education,
Division of Exceptional Learners

Judy Ganser, M.D., MPH, Maternal Child Health
Services, Indiana State Department of Health

Phyllis Kikendall, FSSA, Healthy Families

OPEN, FSSA, Division of Disabilities and
Rehabilitative Services

Tim Maley, FSSA, Office of
Medicaid Policy & Planning

Cheryl Shearer, FSSA, Division of Mental Health

Personnel Preparation

Azar Hadadian, Ph.D, Muncie

Legislators

Vanessa Summers, State Representative
Indianapolis

Child Care

OPEN

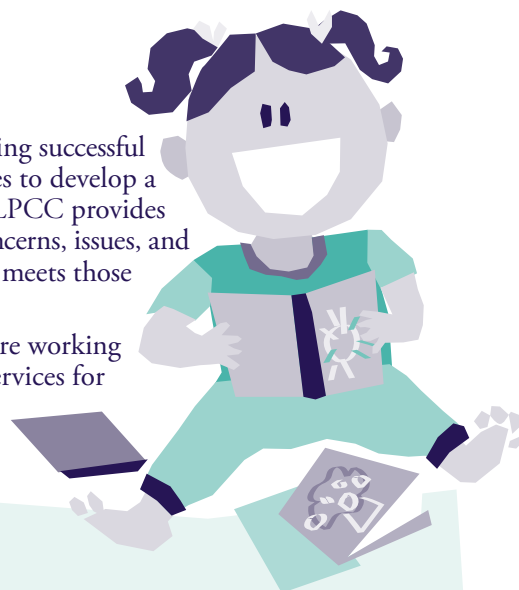
Head Start

Jennifer Modesitt, New Richmond

What is the role of the First Steps Local Planning and Coordinating Councils (LPCCs)?

Thanks to having LPCCs in every one of Indiana's 92 counties, our state is making successful progress toward bringing together federal, state, local, and private funding sources to develop a coordinated, community-based, family-centered system of services. Each county's LPCC provides the authentic voice for early intervention services at the local level by identifying concerns, issues, and strengths unique to each community and then crafting a service delivery system that meets those locally identified needs.

In an effort to extend all that has been learned in early intervention, local LPCCs are working with each county's Step Ahead process, a pioneering framework for coordinating services for children ages birth to 13 and their families.



Our Mission:

To assure that all Indiana families with infants and toddlers experiencing developmental delays or disabilities have access to early intervention services close to home when they need them. This is accomplished through the implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated statewide system of local interagency councils called First Steps.

Our Vision:

Our goal is to serve infants and toddlers with or at-risk for special developmental needs by providing a family-centered, comprehensive, coordinated, neighborhood-based system of services for them and their families. To this end, we:

- ◆ Involve families in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the service system.
- ◆ Make services accessible and widely dispersed throughout the community.
- ◆ Offer choices to families that are typical of the choices available to all families of young children in their everyday routines, settings, and activities.
- ◆ Offer services that are culturally sensitive and tailored to individual needs of the child as well as family priorities.
- ◆ Offer services that exemplify best practices in early intervention and be accountable for the quality of these services by evaluating them in terms of process and outcome.
- ◆ Respect families by acknowledging that they are the primary constant in the child's life and by helping them to make choices as well as supporting them as they implement those choices, even when we disagree with them.
- ◆ Focus on prevention of, as well as intervention for, disabilities among infants and toddlers, keeping in mind that the ultimate goal is maximizing the potential of children so that they can function as contributing members of society as adults.
- ◆ Creatively use existing resources and seek additional resources to maximize service options for families and to fairly compensate staff providing services.

